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Factors Influencing Study Abroad Participation Among Binghamton University Students

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FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDY ABROAD PARTICIPATION AMONG
BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

BY

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BA, Utica College, 2009

CAPSTONE PROJECT

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the degree of Masters in Public Administration in the Graduate School of
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Executive Summary

Binghamton University (BU)'s Office of International Programs (OIP) offers almost 30 study abroad programs. Increasing BU students' study abroad participation is one of the ways by which the University aims to increase "students' preparation for a global society" (Binghamton University, Office of the Provost 2010b, p. 12). The OIP has continually strived to increase students' study abroad participation, with an objective of increasing the percentage of the University's graduating class that study abroad to 25%; however, it has not yet met its objective.

This study examines the factors (both student-related and institutional-related) that influence BU undergraduate students' participation in study abroad programs. The data that I analyzed in my examination included the responses of 1,736 BU students to a survey, as well as the responses of 9 BU focus group participants, 7 of which have studied abroad, and 2 of which have not. The main findings in this study were: 1) financial considerations are a key factor influencing students' study abroad decisions; 2) study abroad participation and intent to study abroad differ significantly across academic majors; 3) male students study abroad and intend to study abroad significantly less than female students; 4) study abroad participation and intent to study abroad differ significantly across race and ethnicity; and 5) there are several ways that the OIP can better inform and assist students. Based on these findings, I recommended that the OIP: 1) focus on increasing the number of students who are aware of funding options for studying abroad; 2) focus on providing more information to students about studying abroad that is relevant to specific majors; and 3) utilize focus groups and/or surveys to gain a fuller understanding of the reasons for differences in study abroad participation and intent to study abroad among students of different genders, races and ethnicities.

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Problem Statement

In our increasingly “global” world, now is a more important time than ever for students to study abroad. While some may believe that students who study abroad have fun abroad but not enriching, life-changing experiences, research disproves that belief. The results of a survey conducted by the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) indicated that studying abroad had a positive effect on students’ “career path, world-view, and self-confidence” (Dwyer & Peters, 2004, p. 1).

Binghamton University’s Office of International Programs (OIP) strives to offer international experiences to as many students as possible through its many programs. In addition to its array of almost 30 study abroad programs and numerous exchange programs, it also offers students the opportunity to complete half of their undergraduate degree at Binghamton University and half at a Turkish University (thereby receiving a dual-diploma from both Universities), the opportunity to pursue a Global Studies minor, and the opportunity to utilize their foreign language skills in their coursework through the Languages Across the Curriculum (LxC) program (Binghamton University, Office of International Programs, 2011). Although the OIP works to promote internationalization at Binghamton University in many ways, the staff of the OIP considers its efforts geared toward students studying abroad to be the “cornerstone” of its internationalization efforts.

Binghamton University’s recognition of the importance of students’ study abroad experiences is evident in its goals that are outlined in its 2010 Strategic Plan. One of the University’s primary goals is to be global (Binghamton University, Office of the Provost, 2010, June 30, p. 15). In order to achieve this goal, the University aims to meet several objectives, one of which is to increase “students’ preparation for a global society” (Binghamton University,

Office of the Provost, 2010, p. 12). A key performance indicator for this objective is to “increase [the] number of students enrolled in study abroad programs by Spring 2015” (Binghamton University, Office of the Provost 2010, p. 12). While the University’s performance indicator doesn’t include a percentage by which the number of students enrolled in study abroad programs should increase, the University’s 1995 Plan for the Future included such a percentage. According to the plan, one of the University’s objectives was that “25% of Binghamton graduates will have a significant international experience as part of their education” (Binghamton University, Office of International Programs, 2000). The staff of the OIP interpreted “a significant international experience” to mean a study abroad experience.

In the 15 years since the University’s 1995 strategic plan was written, the OIP has continued to strive toward the fulfillment of the University’s objective to increase the percentage of the University’s graduating class that study abroad to 25%. Unfortunately, however, the OIP has not yet met that objective. From 2005-2010, the number of Binghamton University study abroad participants as a percentage of the University’s graduating class has fluctuated, but has not been higher than 17.2%, which occurred in 2005 (Binghamton University, Office of International Programs, 2010, p. 5). The percentage of Binghamton University’s graduating class that study abroad is still well above the national percentage of students enrolled at universities and colleges nationwide who study abroad (2%) (Lincoln Commission, 2005, p. 13); however, it is far short of the percentages of several doctorate institutions in the U.S., some of which have percentages of 60% or higher (Bhandari & Chow, 2009, p. 98). The abovementioned percentages indicate that Binghamton University, as well as many other universities across the country, face the challenge of increasing the percentage of their graduating classes that study abroad.

An increase in the number of students who study abroad would likely have an impact not only within universities and within students' lives, but also within organizations. Ethnic diversity is increasing within organizations in the United States, "with more workforce participation than ever by African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Hispanics" (Pitts & Jarry, 2007, p. 234). As diversity increases within organizations, employees' cultural competence and knowledge about how to communicate and work well with people of ethnic backgrounds different from their own is more important than ever. Students' study abroad experiences, which "influence [their] interactions with people from different cultures" (Dwyer & Peters, 2004, p. 1) long after their return from abroad, may help increase students' interpersonal skills and abilities to relate to people who are different from them within organizations. Increasing the number of Binghamton University students who have study abroad experiences will help the University prepare its students for employment in an age of globalization. An increase in the number of students who study abroad is also important to the field of public administration, because public administrators are trying to determine how to increase cultural competence within organizations due to its crucial role in the delivery of services to diverse populations (Chrisman, 2007).

In 2006 - 2007, a marketing research team of students from Binghamton University's School of Management conducted a study to determine why the rate of Binghamton University students' enrollment in study abroad programs decreased, identify the main reasons why students decide to study abroad or to not study abroad, and make recommendations to the Office of International Programs about ways for it to improve the marketing of its programs. The target respondents of the study were students who had studied abroad on one of the OIP's study abroad programs, students who were interested in the OIP's study abroad programs, and students who did not know about the OIP's study abroad programs. The participation of each of the target

groups in the study was low, which raises concerns that the study's sample was not representative of the University's student body. Thirty-one of 1600 students who had studied abroad completed the online survey, 5 of 1030 students who had contacted the OIP but decided not to study abroad completed the online survey, 21 of 1512 students who had participated in an OIP information session completed the online survey, and 65 of 200 students who did not know about the OIP's study abroad programs participated in a phone interview. Due to the low response rates of the target groups, more research should be done to further explore the factors that lead Binghamton University students to study abroad and dissuade them from studying abroad. This topic is the focus of this capstone project.

Research Question:

What factors (both student-related and institutional-related) influence Binghamton University students' participation in study abroad programs?

Literature Review

A review of the literature about factors that influence study abroad participation reveals that the factors can be characterized as either student-related or institutional-related; however, the factors that were identified in the literature were primarily student-related. Studies have shown that several student-related factors influence students' participation in study abroad programs. The main factors that are cited in the literature include: race and ethnicity, gender, major, household income, and enrollment status (part-time or full-time) (Dessoiff, 2006; Salisbury, Umbach, & Paulsen, 2009; Thomas & McMahon, 1998; Hembroff & Rusz, 1993; Institute of International Education, 2008; Lincoln Commission, 2005; NAFSA, 2003; Brux & Fry, 2010; Carter, 1991).

While literature notes that each of the abovementioned factors influences study abroad participation, there are few studies that seek to explain the underlying reasons for the influence that these factors have on students' study abroad participation. One of the studies that sought to do so was conducted by Salisbury et.al. (2009), who stated that students' decisions to participate in study abroad programs may be "related to students' socioeconomic status and the amount of social and cultural capital they have accumulated both prior to enrolling in and during college" (p. 122). In the following sections, I will explain what studies have found about each of the main student-related factors. I will then explain the institutional-related factors that are identified within the literature.

Student-related factors

Race and ethnicity: The representation of minorities on study abroad programs is important for several reasons. Diverse groups of study abroad students enable people in other countries to recognize the diversity of people, cultures, and ideas that exists in the U.S. (Lincoln Commission, 2005; Brux & Fry, 2010). Non-minority students can also benefit from going on programs with minority students, because they will be able to reflect upon their experiences abroad with students whose backgrounds are different from their own (Brux & Fry, 2010). In addition, minority students themselves have much to gain from studying abroad (Brux & Fry, 2010).

Unfortunately, research shows that minority students are underrepresented in study abroad programs. For example, while black students made up more than 10% of the total undergraduate enrollment in the U.S. in 2003-2004, only 3.4% of the U.S. students who studied abroad in 2003-2004 were black (Institute of International Education, 2008). From 2003-2004, white students were overrepresented in study abroad programs; while white students made up

less than 70% of the total undergraduate enrollment in the U.S., more than 80% of the U.S. students who studied abroad were white (Institute of International Education, 2008).

Financial concerns often prevent many minority students from seriously considering or participating in study abroad experiences (Dessoff, 2006). Some students may be dissuaded due to the idea common among parents of minority students that “study abroad programs are a frivolous luxury that have no place in a serious education” (Carter, 1991, p. 23). Another concern that minority students’ families sometimes have is that the students will experience racism abroad (Carter, 1991). Research shows that minority students, in addition to their families, fear racism abroad (Fels, 1993). While several studies point to many reasons why minority students are underrepresented in study abroad programs, Salisbury et.al.’s study (2009) found that one of these reasons may not be “a lack of desire” (p. 133) to study abroad on the part of minority students. Salisbury et.al.’s study (2009) revealed that with the exception of Asian Pacific Islanders, who “are 15 percentage points less likely to plan to study abroad” than whites, minority students plan to study abroad at a level equal to whites (p. 133).

Gender: Another group of students that is underrepresented in study abroad programs is males. In 2006-2007, nearly twice as many females studied abroad than did males (Institute of International Education, 2008). Unlike minority students, males are not as likely to plan to study abroad as their female counterparts (Salisbury et.al., 2009).

Major: Like the contrast in study abroad participation between students of different genders and races/ethnicities, there is also a sharp contrast in study abroad participation between students in different majors. According to the Lincoln Commission (2005), “the majority of Americans studying abroad have tended to major in ‘traditional’ fields such as the humanities, social sciences, and foreign languages” (p. 16). While this trend appears to be altering slightly as

business and management students now study abroad in numbers only second to social sciences students, the percent of students in other pre-professional majors, such as engineering and education, is consistently low (Lincoln Commission, 2005, p. 16). The main reason for the relatively low percentage of students in disciplines such as engineering and education is that the many curricula requirements of these programs often don't enable students to take the time to study abroad (NASFA, 2003; Dessoff, 2006; Lincoln Commission, 2005).

Enrollment status: Three-quarters of undergraduate students in the United States are “nontraditional” (NAFSA, 2003, p. 9). Nontraditional students include, among others, those who attend college part-time, work-full-time, and are “financially independent, married, or have dependents” (NAFSA, 2003, p. 9). The job and family responsibilities that many nontraditional students have make it difficult for them to study abroad (NAFSA, 2003; Lincoln Commission, 2005; Dessoff, 2006).

Household income: Financial concerns “often discourage students from studying abroad,” whether the financial constraints students face are actually “real or imagined” (Lincoln Commission, 2005, p. 9). Salisbury et.al. (2009) found that “lower income students – i.e., students from families eligible for federal financial aid – are less likely to plan to study abroad than higher income students” (p. 133). This finding indicates that “insufficient financial capital significantly inhibits the likelihood of participation in study abroad even in” the planning stage of study abroad (Salisbury et.al., 2009, p. 133).

Institutional-related factors

According to the literature, an institutional-related factor that plays a negative role in students' study abroad participation is a lack of support for studying abroad by faculty members and administrators. This lack of support is in the form of a belief “that the [course] offerings

available elsewhere are hard to equate with programs on American campuses” (Lincoln Commission, 2005, p. 16), which makes it difficult for students to receive credit for courses from foreign universities. The existence of this belief indicates that faculty and administrators at some institutions either do not see or do not “emphasize the importance of study abroad on campus,” which they need to do in order for study abroad participation to increase and “become an integral part of the undergraduate experience” (Lincoln Commission, 2005, p. 16).

The literature also identifies the degree to which institutions offer study abroad programs that are “designed to accommodate [the] unique needs” of nontraditional students as an institutional-related factor that affects students’ study abroad participation (NAFSA, 2003). One way that institutions can accommodate nontraditional students’ needs is by offering short-term study abroad programs that last for only a few weeks (NAFSA, 2003).

The literature provides evidence that both student-related factors and institutional factors influence students’ participation in study abroad programs. Through my study, I attempted to determine if the student-related factors that influence study abroad participation and intent to study abroad (race/ethnicity, gender, major, and household income), as identified within the literature, appear to influence students’ study abroad participation and intent to study abroad at Binghamton University. Furthermore, I attempted to examine institutional factors (related to the OIP’s means of informing and assisting students) that may influence students’ study abroad participation.

Methodology

Data collection

The Binghamton University undergraduate student population was an appropriate population from which to gather data for this study, because students could provide information

about their individual reasons for choosing to study abroad or choosing not to study abroad. In addition, students could provide information about their thoughts on how well the OIP informs and assists students. Since data was collected from human subjects in this study, Binghamton University's Institutional Review Board needed to approve the proposal for this study before the study could be conducted. The letter from the Institutional Review Board that confirms its approval of this study is shown in Appendix A.

Two sources of data were used to determine the factors that influence the study abroad participation of Binghamton University students; these data sources were a survey of current Binghamton University undergraduate students and focus groups with Binghamton University undergraduate students who have and have not studied abroad. The anonymous survey, which is shown in Appendix B, asked students to identify all of the factors that influenced their decision to either study abroad, intend to study abroad, or not study abroad, as well as questions related to their interaction with Binghamton University's Office of International Programs and general demographic information questions. The focus group protocol, which is shown in Appendix C, included questions that were similar to the survey questions and were meant to draw out more in-depth responses from students.

Survey of Binghamton University undergraduate students

The survey was sent via e-mail by Sean McKittrick, the director of Binghamton University's Office of Institutional Research and Planning, to 9,550 undergraduate students who are currently attending Binghamton University. It is important to note that the survey was not sent to approximately 450 other Binghamton University undergraduate students who opted out of past surveys that were e-mailed to them by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. The survey was distributed on March 8, 2011, and survey responses were collected through

March 17, 2001. Students were offered an incentive to participate in the survey; participants were entered into a lottery to win a \$100 gift card to the retail store Best Buy. There were 1,736 respondents, which meant that there was an overall response rate of 18%. The large sample size was one of the strengths of this study, as it allows for more confidence that the views expressed by the students are representative of those of the larger university population than it would if the sample size was smaller. However, the views of the students who chose to participate in the survey may not be entirely representative of those of the larger population, as students with stronger views about studying abroad may have chosen to participate in the survey than those with indifferent views about studying abroad. In addition, the demographics of the survey sample in regard to gender as compared to those of the entire University population indicate that the sample is not completely representative of the student population, as explained in the section below.

Demographics of survey sample

The demographic characteristics of the survey sample and the demographic characteristics of Binghamton University's undergraduate population in Fall 2010 are shown in Tables 1 and 2, respectively, which are located in Appendix D. The percentages of survey respondents who were males and females (41% and 59%, respectively) differed from the percentage of the student population who were males and females (53% and 47%, respectively). The representativeness of the survey sample based on race and ethnicity cannot fully be assessed, because the survey did not include a "non-resident alien" category (which includes international students), while the data reported by Binghamton University's Office of Institutional Research and Planning for Fall 2010 included this category (Binghamton University, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, 2010). While 65% of the survey respondents were white,

white students made up 48% of the student population. The percentage of survey respondents who were Hispanic or Latino (7%) was similar to the percentage of Hispanic or Latino students (8%) as a percentage of the student population, and the percentage of survey respondents who were Black or African American (5%) was the same as the percentage of Black or African American students as a percentage of the student population. The percentage of survey respondents who identified as Asian or Asian-American (20%) was higher than the percentage of the student population that identified as Asian (12%); the differences in these percentages is likely due to the survey's lack of a "non-resident alien" category. If this category had been included in the survey, it is likely that the percentage of students who identified as "Asian or Asian-American" would have been lower. As indicated in Tables 1 and 2, the academic major categories included in the survey differed somewhat from the academic major categories as they were reported by Binghamton University's Office of Institutional Research and Planning (2010); however, while taking these differences into account, the percentages of survey respondents in each academic major appear to be similar to the percentages of students in the student population who were in each academic major.

Focus groups of Binghamton University undergraduate students

To gather more in-depth responses from students about the factors that influenced their study abroad decision, two focus group discussions were conducted with undergraduate students; one was conducted with students who have studied abroad, and one was conducted with students who have not studied abroad. Students were offered an incentive to participate in the focus groups; each focus group participant was offered a \$5 gift card to the BU bookstore. The focus group with students who have studied abroad consisted of 7 participants and lasted for 30 minutes, and the focus group with students who have not studied abroad consisted of 2

participants and lasted for approximately 15 minutes. I assured focus group participants that no personally identifiable information would be collected during the focus group discussion; however, confidentiality was not guaranteed. The lack of a guarantee of confidentiality was one of the weaknesses of this study, as some of the students may not have expressed their beliefs fully as a result; however, due to the fact that the questions asked were not highly sensitive in nature, there is a minimal likelihood that students chose not respond fully to questions for this reason.

Participants for the focus group made up of students who had studied abroad were selected if they had studied abroad in the 2010-2011 academic year. Only students who had studied abroad in the 2010-2011 academic year were chosen so that the experiences of students who studied abroad would be as similar as possible to those who have not studied abroad (in terms of the study abroad advising and recruitment that was carried out by the Office of International Programs). The contact information of these students was provided to me by an OIP staff member. Participants for the focus group made up of students who had not studied abroad were selected if they had attended an information session for Binghamton University's 2011 winter intersession study abroad program in Shenzhen, China, and/or attended the OIP's study abroad fair in Fall 2010. The reason that the participants in the latter focus group were selected from such a small number of students was because the contact information of students who attended the Shenzhen program information sessions and study abroad fair was readily available, whereas it was not available for students from other information sessions. I already had the contact information of students who attended the Shenzhen program information sessions because I helped Professor Tom Sinclair to organize and hold the information sessions. I received the contact information of students who attended the study abroad fair from an OIP staff

member. One of the weaknesses of this study was that only 2 students who have not studied abroad chose to participate in a focus group, and both of those students want to study abroad but are not sure yet whether or not they will do so; no students who definitively do not intend to study abroad participated in a focus group.

Demographics of focus groups

The demographic characteristics (gender, race/ethnicity, and academic majors) of the students in each focus group are shown in Tables 3 and 4, which are located in Appendix D. While there was only a small number of participants in each focus group, the focus group with students who have studied abroad consisted of students from several different academic majors and had almost an equal distribution of males (4) and females (3). Between both focus groups, there were 5 white students, 1 Black or African-American student, 1 Asian or Asian-American student, and 1 student who identified as “Other.”

Data analysis

Survey data analysis

Chi square tests were used to determine the probability that the association between variables was due to chance. This probability was determined statistically by comparing the differences in the various groups of students who responded to a question in a certain way. If these numbers were different than would be expected, based on the percentages of students from each group who answered the question, there was a statistically significant relationship between the variables. For example, if the numbers of males and females who responded to a question (e.g.: “Have you studied abroad?”) were different than would be expected, there was a statistically significant relationship between the variables (i.e.: gender and study abroad participation). I chose to use a .05 significant level in this study, which means that relationships

that are noted as “statistically significant” throughout the remainder of this paper are statistically significant only if there is less than a 5% chance that the difference between groups is due to chance alone. During this study, chi square tests were mainly used to determine if there were statistically significant relationships between the demographic variables and other variables in the survey, including factors that influenced students’ study abroad decisions. While chi square tests are able to reveal statistically significant relationships among variables, they are not able to determine if one variable caused another.

Focus group data analysis

The two focus group discussions were recorded and then transcribed. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data in the transcriptions. The transcripts were coded, and the codes were categorized by common theme. The themes that emerged during each focus group were then considered along with the themes that emerged in my survey data.

Findings

The student-related factors that were cited in the literature appear to influence students’ study abroad participation and intent to study abroad. In addition, I found that the factors that influenced the decisions of students of different genders, academic majors, and household incomes not to study abroad were different. I also found that there are several ways in which students believe the OIP can better inform and assist students. Before I explain my key findings, it is important for me to note that 19% of the survey respondents have studied abroad, while 81% have not. Of the students who have not studied abroad, 43% intend to study abroad, while 57% do not intend to study abroad. This information is summarized in Tables 5 and 6, which are located in Appendix D. I will now explain the 5 key findings that emerged from my analysis of the data collected in this study.

Finding 1: Financial considerations are a key factor influencing students' study abroad decisions

Seventy percent of respondents who do not intend to study abroad indicated that financial concerns were a factor that influenced their decisions not to study abroad. Although students could select more than one factor that influenced their decisions not to study abroad, financial concerns were the factor that the highest percentage of students selected, as shown in Table 7, which is located in Appendix D. While financial concerns influenced students' decision not to study abroad across all household incomes, there still was a statistically significant relationship ($p = .000$) between household income and respondents' indication that financial concerns influenced their decisions not to study abroad. Eighty-seven percent of students with a household income of \$49,999 or less who do not intend to study abroad identified financial concerns as a factor that influenced their decisions not to study abroad, while 53% of students with a household income of \$100,000 or more who do not intend to study abroad identified financial concerns as a factor that influenced their decisions not to study abroad.

There was not a significant relationship between household income and intent to study abroad, which contradicts the findings of previous studies; according to Salisbury et.al., (2009), students of lower incomes are less likely to intend to study abroad than students of higher incomes. Although students with different incomes intended to study abroad at similar rates, the relationship between household income and students' study abroad participation was statistically significant ($p = .036$). The percentage of respondents with household incomes of \$49,999 or less who studied abroad (22%) was higher than the percentage of respondents with higher household incomes who studied abroad. Thirteen percent of students with household incomes of \$50,000 to \$99,999 have studied abroad, and 15% of respondents with household incomes of \$100,000 or

more have studied abroad. The survey data does not indicate the reason why students with different household incomes intend to study abroad at similar rates but students with household incomes of \$49,999 or less study abroad at higher rates than students with higher incomes. Intuitively, the reason may be that higher percentages of students from the lowest income category receive financial aid. Lower percentages of students with higher incomes may receive financial aid than those with lower incomes, but many students with higher incomes may not have incomes high enough to be able to pay for study abroad without the cost placing a financial burden on their households.

Finding 2: Study abroad participation and intent to study abroad differ significantly across academic majors

Forty-two percent of all respondents who studied abroad have majors that are within the humanities or social and behavioral sciences. Table 8, which is located in Appendix D, shows the percentage of respondents within each academic major as percentages of the total number of respondents who have studied abroad. There is a statistically significant relationship between a student's major and their decision about whether or not to study abroad ($p = .000$). Table 8 also shows the percentage of students within each academic major who have studied abroad and have not studied abroad.

As indicated in Table 8, higher percentages of students with majors in the humanities, business, and social and behavioral sciences studied abroad than did students with nursing, math, engineering, computer science, and technology, and physical and biological sciences majors. There is also a statistically significant relationship ($p = .000$) between a student's major and their intent to study abroad. Table 9, which is located in Appendix D, shows the percentage of

students within each major category who intend to study abroad and do not intend to study abroad.

While higher percentages of students with majors in the physical and biological sciences category intend to study abroad than do students in four other categories, lower percentages of students in the physical and biological sciences category studied abroad than did students in those four categories, as indicated in Tables 8 and 9.

To gain an understanding of the potential reasons why students differ significantly in their study abroad participation and intent to study abroad according to their majors, I examined the factors that influenced students' decisions not to study abroad. This examination, which is summarized in Table 10 and located in Appendix D, revealed:

- Higher percentages of students with majors in the math, engineering, computer science and technology category indicated that the following 3 factors influenced their decision not to study abroad compared to students in all other academic majors, with the exception of undeclared majors: 1) a lack of benefit from studying abroad; 2) a lack of interest in studying abroad; and 3) a lack of foreign language skills.
- 58% of all respondents who do not intend to study abroad selected inability to fit a study abroad program into their course schedule as a factor that influenced their decision not to study abroad. However, higher percentages of students with majors in the nursing and physical and biological sciences categories indicated that an inability to fit study abroad program into their course schedule was a factor that influenced their decision not to study abroad compared to students in all other academic majors.

Finding 3: Male students study abroad and intend to study abroad significantly less than female students

There is a statistically significant relationship ($p = .000$) between gender and intent to study abroad as well as between gender and study abroad participation ($p = .000$). While 21% of female survey respondents have studied abroad, 13% of male survey respondents have done so. The percentages of both male and female students who intend to study abroad (if they have not already) are higher than those of students of each gender who have studied abroad; however, the percentage of male students who intend to study abroad (35%) is lower than the percentage of female students who intend to do so (49%). These findings are consistent with literature (Institute of International Education, 2008; Salisbury et.al., 2009). I examined the factors that influenced the decisions of males and female students not to study abroad. Table 11, which is located in Appendix D, shows all of the factors that influenced students' decisions not to study abroad, as well as the percentages of male and female students who indicated that the factors influenced their decisions. Table 12, which is located in Appendix D, shows only the factors that were selected by males and females differently at a significant level, and the percentages of males and females who selected each factor.

As shown in Table 12, higher percentages of males indicated that the following 4 factors influenced their decision not to study abroad than did females: 1) a lack of foreign language skills, 2) a lack of interest in studying abroad, 3) a lack of anticipated benefit from studying abroad, and 4) a lack of information about BU's study abroad programs. The reason why this is the case may be related to gender differences in academic major choices. Males made up 73% of the respondents with majors in the math, engineering, computer science and technology category. As stated in the previous section, higher percentages of students in the math,

engineering, computer science and technology major category indicated that a lack of foreign language skills, a lack of interest in studying abroad, and a lack of benefit from studying abroad influenced their decision not to study abroad than did students in any other major category, with the exception of the undeclared category. Table 12 also shows that higher percentages of females indicated that an inability to fit studying abroad into their course schedules influenced their decision not to study abroad than did males. The reason why this is the case may also be related to gender differences in academic major choices. Higher percentages of students with majors in the physical and biological sciences and nursing categories were females (59% and 90%, respectively). As stated in the previous section, physical and biological sciences and nursing were the two major categories in which the highest percentages of students selected inability to fit study abroad into their course schedule as a factor that influenced their decision not to study abroad.

Finding 4: Study abroad participation and intent to study abroad differ significantly across race and ethnicity

There is a statistically significant relationship ($p = .001$) between race and ethnicity and study abroad participation; however, the percentages of white (17%), Hispanic or Latino (15%), and black or African American respondents (13%) who have studied abroad are almost the same, as shown in Table 13, which is located in Appendix D. This finding contradicts literature (Salisbury et.al., 2009) that states that lower percentages of racial and ethnic minorities study abroad than do white students. In this study, higher percentages of students who identified their race or ethnicity as “Other” category or Asian or Asian-American studied abroad compared to students in all other race or ethnicity categories. However, this survey did not include a question that asked students to identify whether or not they are international students. Since 10% of

Binghamton University's undergraduate population consisted of international students in the Fall of 2010 (Office of Institutional Research, 2010), it is likely that several of the students who identified themselves as "Asian or Asian-American" or "Other" are international students. International students who are studying at Binghamton University may have indicated on the survey that they have studied abroad.

Although black or African American and Hispanic or Latino respondents studied abroad at about the same rate as white respondents, the percentages of black or African American and Hispanic or Latino respondents who intend to study abroad (60% and 55%, respectively) were higher than the percentage of white respondents who intend to study abroad (39%), as shown in Table 14, which is located in Appendix D. The relationship between race and ethnicity and intent to study abroad is statistically significant ($p = .000$). This finding contradicts studies that have shown that African American and Hispanic or Latino students typically intend to study abroad at rates that are equal to the rates at which white students intend to study abroad (Salisbury et.al., 2009).

The data in this study do not provide convincing evidence for the reason(s) why black or African American and Hispanic or Latino students intend to study abroad at significantly higher rates than white students but do not study abroad at higher rates than white students. For example, the only factor selected significantly differently by students of different races and ethnicities who intend to study abroad was "past travel experience." Higher percentages of white students (48%) indicated that past travel experience influenced their decision to intend to study abroad than did students in any other race or ethnicity category, including black or African American (23%) students and Hispanic or Latino students (35%). The relationship between race and ethnicity and students' indication that past travel experience influenced their decision to

intend to study abroad is statistically significant ($p = .002$). The differences in students' indications that past travel experience influenced their decisions to intend to study abroad may be related to the fact that there was a significant relationship ($p = .000$) between students' household income and race and ethnicity, with higher percentages of white students with household incomes in the highest income category compared to students in all other race or ethnicity categories. This finding indicates that higher percentages of white students than black or African American students and Hispanic or Latino students may have past travel experience before intending to study abroad due to the differences in household income between the students. If this is the case, perhaps higher numbers of black or African American students and Hispanic or Latino students need logistical assistance (i.e. applying for a passport) from the OIP in preparation for a trip abroad than white students do. If they do not receive this assistance, they may view the possibility of traveling abroad as desirable but difficult to achieve.

Finding 5: There are several ways that the OIP can better inform and assist students

The data that supported the finding that there are several ways that the OIP can better inform and assist students included students' responses to 2 open-ended survey questions and 2 open-ended focus group questions. The 2 open-ended survey questions were: "In what way(s) do you think the Office of International Programs could better inform students about study abroad opportunities?" and "In what way(s) do you think the Office of International Programs could better assist students who plan to study abroad?" There were 1,067 responses to the first question, and 535 responses to the second question. Students' survey responses to each of the two open-ended questions are summarized in Tables 15 and 16, which are located in Appendix D. The 2 open-ended focus group questions were: "If you were a staff member in the Office of International Programs, how would you inform students about study abroad opportunities?" and

“What assistance and/or information would you offer to students who have shown an interest in studying abroad but have not yet made a final decision about whether or not to study abroad?”

My analysis of students’ responses to the questions cited above revealed several themes that provide insight into institutional-related factors that may influence students’ study abroad participation. Themes were determined by considering the frequency with which responses were made, as well as the presence of the responses within both the survey and at least one of the two focus group discussions. To view quotes from focus group participants related to each of the themes, see Appendix E. While more students overall suggested ways that the OIP can better inform and assist students than did not, it is important to note that eighty-eight survey respondents expressed their belief that the OIP is “doing a good job” of informing students about study abroad opportunities, and twenty-six survey respondents who have studied abroad or have planned to study abroad expressed their belief that the OIP is “doing a good job” of assisting students who plan to go abroad. These respondents did not suggest any ways that the OIP can better inform and assist students. The key themes are described in detail below.

Theme 1: The OIP can better inform students about study abroad programs that are suitable for specific majors

Forty survey respondents thought that the OIP should provide more information about study abroad programs that is specific to students’ majors. Several of these students made a point of stressing that students in some majors, particularly those within the Watson School of Engineering, are in greater need of hearing about specific programs related to their major and about how they can fit studying abroad into their schedules. For example, one survey respondent said: “I’m [an] engineering major, and as far as I’ve heard, it’s very hard to study abroad[:]

however, if we were better informed of programs we could do that wouldn't hinder our academics, that would help students study abroad."

Theme 2: The OIP can provide students with more information related to funding options for studying abroad

Sixty-nine survey responses were made by students who thought the OIP should provide students with more information related to funding options for studying abroad (e.g., financial aid and/or scholarships). It is important to note that because these responses were gathered from two different questions, the same students may have made some of these responses. An example of a survey response that exemplifies the sentiment of students related to this theme is: "Most are not aware that the cost [of studying abroad] can be managed by most students – more financial information sessions would help." Students' responses that the OIP should provide more information about using financial aid for study abroad programs were supported by the fact that 44% percent of all students who do not intend to study abroad were unaware that financial aid may be used for study abroad programs. Because only students who did not intend to study abroad were asked on the survey if they were aware that financial aid may be used for study abroad programs, it is unclear whether or not awareness that financial aid may be used for study abroad programs is linked to intent to study abroad; however, several students' responses to open-ended questions in the survey and the focus group discussions suggest that knowledge about potential funding options may influence some students' intent to study abroad. For example, one survey respondent stated:

"The problem with my specific situation is financial issues and before this survey, I didn't know there was financial aid for these programs. So my suggestion is to maybe

promote that aspect more, because I know that my peers have that same problem as well.”

Theme 3: The OIP can improve and/or increase its advertising efforts

One hundred and thirty-four survey respondents indicated that they felt the OIP can improve and/or increase its advertising efforts. In response to the question “In what way(s) do you think the Office of International Programs could better inform students about study abroad opportunities?” one student said: “Better advertising[;] come to the students instead of making the students come to them,” and another student said: “By advertising in creative ways. E-mails and posters don’t cut it anymore.” While many students simply made brief statements such as “advertise more,” others mentioned specific pieces of information that should be advertised, including the existence of the OIP (23 responses), the location of the OIP (18 responses), and the existence of OIP information sessions (17 responses). Students’ statements that they need more information about the OIP and its location were supported by the fact that 30% of survey respondents had not heard of the OIP before taking the survey, and 60% of survey respondents did not know where the OIP is located on campus.

As shown in Table 15, most students expressed that the best way for students to receive information from the OIP is through e-mail (226 responses) and flyers/posters (102 responses); however, not all students’ responses were aligned with this view, as exemplified by the student’s criticism about e-mails and posters that is cited above.

Interestingly, some of the means of advertising that students suggested, including e-mails and B-Line announcements, have already been utilized by the OIP, according to Katharine Krebs, who is the director of the OIP (personal communication, April 19, 2011). Currently, the OIP sends e-mails to specific academic departments, and the academic departments distribute the

e-mails to students on listservs. Although some survey respondents thought that e-mails should be sent specifically through major listservs, others thought that students should be e-mailed “directly” from the OIP. According to Krebs, the OIP’s student peer study abroad advisers assist the OIP with its advertising efforts.

Theme 4: The OIP should provide more opportunities for students to hear about other students’ past study abroad experiences

Both survey respondents and focus group participants felt that it is beneficial for students to hear about other students’ past study abroad experiences. Thirty-two survey respondents thought that the OIP could better inform students about study abroad opportunities by enabling students who have not studied abroad to hear about the study abroad experiences of students who have studied abroad, and forty-one survey respondents thought that the OIP could better assist students who plan to study abroad by connecting them with students who have studied abroad in the past. Focus group participants expressed this view, as well, as shown in Appendix E.

Recommendations

While determining my recommendations for the OIP, I took into consideration the main student- and institutional- related factors that influenced study abroad participation and/or intent to study abroad that emerged in my findings. Several of these student-related and institutional-related factors are related to each other. For example, more information about funding options may convince some students with financial concerns that studying abroad is possible. Similarly, more information that is specific to certain majors may convince students with majors in certain major categories (including males in the math, engineering, computer science and technology category) that studying abroad is possible and/or beneficial. My final recommendation is related to the need to further examine differences among students that emerged within this study that

were not fully explained by the data in this study. Each of my recommendations is aligned with my findings, and also reflects the need to minimize the amount of additional staff time that is taken in implementing my recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Focus on increasing the number of students who are aware of funding options for studying abroad

As explained above, financial concerns is the factor that influenced the decision of the highest number of survey respondents not to study abroad. Some students may not be able to afford to study abroad, even if they know about and are able to receive funding sources such as financial aid; however, knowledge about funding options may influence some students' intent to study abroad, as explained above. One of the potential ways that the OIP could increase the number of students who are aware of funding options for studying abroad is by sending e-mails to all undergraduate students at the beginning of each semester that provide a brief introduction to students about the OIP as well as explanations about ways that students may be able to fund study abroad experiences (e.g. financial aid, scholarships). By doing so, the OIP would not only be advertising its existence and location on campus, but also providing a message with financial information that students may need to read before deciding that a study abroad experience may be possible for them. Another way the OIP could convey the message to students that funding options are available is by tailoring its flyer/poster advertising to show this message. For example, the OIP could have flyers that state: "Think You Can't Afford to Study Abroad? Find Out How It May be Possible!" with a link to a page on the OIP website that provides information about funding options may grab students' attention and convince them to consider studying abroad. The OIP's student peer advisers could also hand out similar flyers to students in areas where students tend to congregate, such as the Student Union.

Recommendation 2: Focus on providing more information to students about studying abroad that is relevant to specific majors

As explained above, many students, particularly students with nursing or physical and biological sciences majors, indicated that an inability to fit studying abroad in their course schedule was a factor that influenced their decision not to study abroad. In addition, higher percentages of students with math, engineering, computer science and technology majors indicated that a lack of anticipated benefit from studying abroad was a factor that influenced their decision not to study abroad than did students in other majors. Students will likely need to meet individually with their academic advisers to determine how they can fit studying abroad into their course schedules; however, some students, particularly those with physical and biological sciences, nursing, and math, engineering, computer science and technology majors may not even broach the subject of studying abroad with their academic advisers if they do not think it is possible to fit it into their schedules and/or if they do not think it will benefit them. As discussed above, forty survey respondents expressed their belief that the OIP should provide more major-specific information to students. Therefore, the OIP needs to focus on informing students, particularly those who are in the abovementioned majors, about study abroad programs that are suitable for their majors, ways that they can fit studying abroad into their course schedules, and ways that their academic studies can benefit from a study abroad experience. One of the potential ways that the OIP can provide this information to students is by holding major-specific information sessions and advertising these information sessions via e-mails that are sent to students in specific majors. Another way it can provide this information to students is by asking students who have studied abroad to write an e-mail that describes how they were able to fit studying abroad into their course schedules and how their study abroad experiences benefited

their academic studies. The OIP can ask academic departments to forward the e-mails written by students to other students who are in their major via major list serves. As explained above, students suggested that the OIP enable students to hear more about the past experiences of other students. Therefore, it would likely be beneficial for students within specific majors to find out how a peer with their major was able to study abroad.

Recommendation 3: Utilize focus groups and/or surveys to gain a fuller understanding of the reasons for differences in study abroad participation and intent to study abroad among students of different genders and races and ethnicities

As discussed above, one of the findings in this study was that significantly lower percentages of males study abroad and intend to study abroad than females. This study also revealed the factors that influenced the decisions of students from each gender not to study abroad; males and females selected these factors at significantly different rates. However, the reasons why students of different genders selected these factors at significantly different rates are not entirely clear (e.g. it is not clear why higher percentages of males indicated that a lack of interest in studying abroad influenced their decision than did females). Further research, through focus groups and/or surveys, could be conducted by the OIP to gain a better understanding of these reasons.

Another finding in this study was that there is a significant relationship between intent to study abroad and race and ethnicity. While Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino survey respondents intend to study abroad at significantly higher rates than white students, the percentages of Black or African American respondents and Hispanic or Latino respondents who study abroad are similar to the percentages of white students who study abroad. As stated above, students of different races and ethnicities may need different amounts of guidance from the OIP

in preparation for a trip abroad, as related to their past travel experience; however, there is not sufficient evidence from the data collected in this study that this is the case. Further research, through focus groups and/or surveys, could be conducted by the OIP to gain a better understanding of the reasons why Black or African American students may initially intend to study abroad but then decide not to study abroad.

Conclusion

This study revealed that there are several student-related factors that influence students' study abroad participation and intent to study abroad. The study also provided an understanding of the ways in which students feel the OIP can improve the ways in which it informs and assists students. Going forward, the OIP should take pride in knowing that many students feel that it is already doing a good job, as discovered in this study, but also consider ways in which it can improve, based on the findings and recommendations within this study.

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Appendix A**Human Subjects Research Approval**

Date: March 3, 2011

To: Katherine Bronk, MPA

From: Anne M. Casella, CIP Administrator
Human Subjects Research Review Committee

Subject: Human Subjects Research Approval
Protocol Number: 1639-11
Protocol title: *Factors Influencing Study Abroad Participation Among Binghamton University Students*

Your project identified above was reviewed by the HSRRC and has received an Exempt approval pursuant to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations, 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) .

An exempt status signifies that you will not be required to submit a Continuing Review application as long as your project involving human subjects remains unchanged. If your project undergoes any changes these changes must be reported to our office prior to implementation, using the form listed below:

http://humansubjects.binghamton.edu/2009_Forms/012_Modification%20Form.rtf

Principal Investigators or any individual involved in the research must report any problems involving the conduct of the study or subject participation. Any problems involving recruitment and consent processes or any deviations from the approved protocol should be reported in writing within five (5) business days as outlined in Binghamton University, Human Subjects Research Review Office, Policy and Procedures IX.F.1 Unanticipated Problems/adverse events/complaints. We also require that the following form be submitted:

<http://humansubjects.binghamton.edu/Forms/Forms/Adverse%20Event%20Form.rtf>

University policy requires you to maintain as a part of your records, any documents pertaining to the use of human subjects in your research. This includes any information or materials conveyed to, and received from, the subjects, as well as any executed consent forms, data and analysis results. These records must be maintained for at least six years after project completion or termination. If this is a funded project, you should be aware that these records are subject to inspection and review by authorized representative of the University, State and Federal governments.

Please notify this office when your project is complete by completing and forwarding to our office the following form:

<http://humansubjects.binghamton.edu/Forms/Forms/Protocol%20Closure%20Form.rtf>

Upon notification we will close the above referenced file. Any reactivation of the project will require a new application.

This documentation is being provided to you via email. A hard copy will not be mailed unless you request us to do so.

Thank you for your cooperation, I wish you success in your research, and please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions or require further assistance.

cc: file
Kristina Lambright

Diane Bulizak, Secretary
Human Subjects Research Review Office
Biotechnology Building, Room 2205
85 Murray Hill Rd.
Vestal, NY 13850
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Appendix B

Survey Instrument

Study Abroad Questions

Have you studied abroad?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If a student answered “Yes” to the question “Have you studied abroad?” he or she was directed to the following questions:

Which of the following factors influenced your decision to study abroad? (Please select *all* that apply).

- ☐ Anticipated career benefits of studying abroad
- ☐ Anticipated personal benefits of studying abroad
- ☐ Anticipated academic benefits of studying abroad
- ☐ Desire to learn and/or use foreign language skills
- ☐ Interest in learning about another culture
- ☐ Financially able to go
- ☐ Ability to get financial aid
- ☐ Information about studying abroad that I received from the Office of International Programs
- ☐ Program(s) offered by Binghamton University in location(s) of interest to me
- ☐ Program(s) offered by SUNY in location(s) of interest to me
- ☐ Past travel experience
- ☐ Flexibility in my course schedule
- ☐ Conversation with someone who had studied abroad
- ☐ Friend(s) who planned to study abroad with me
- ☐ Encouragement from friends
- ☐ Encouragement from family
- ☐ Encouragement from my academic adviser
- ☐ Encouragement from my academic department
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *greatest* influence on your decision to study abroad. **(Factors listed)**

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *second greatest* influence on your decision to study abroad. (If applicable) **(Factors listed)**

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *third greatest* influence on your decision to study abroad. (If applicable) **(Factors listed)**

How did you first hear about the study abroad program that you ended up going on?

- ☐ Website of the Office of International Programs
- ☐ Website of another SUNY school
- ☐ SUNY study abroad search engine
- ☐ B-Line
- ☐ A flyer posted on campus
- ☐ A friend
- ☐ A staff member of the Office of International Programs
- ☐ My academic adviser
- ☐ A faculty member (besides my adviser)
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Was your decision to attend Binghamton University influenced by its study abroad program offerings?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If a student answered “No” to the question “Have you studied abroad?” he or she was directed to the following question:

Do you intend to study abroad?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If a student answered “Yes” to the question “Do you intend to study abroad?” he or she was directed to the following questions:

Which of the following factors influenced your decision to (plan to) study abroad? (Please select *all* that apply).

- ☐ Anticipated career benefits of studying abroad
- ☐ Anticipated personal benefits of studying abroad
- ☐ Anticipated academic benefits of studying abroad
- ☐ Desire to learn and/or use foreign language skills
- ☐ Interest in learning about another culture
- ☐ Financially able to go

- ☐ Ability to get financial aid
- ☐ Information about studying abroad that I received from the Office of International Programs
- ☐ Program(s) offered by Binghamton University in location(s) of interest to me
- ☐ Program(s) offered by SUNY in location(s) of interest to me
- ☐ Past travel experience
- ☐ Flexibility in my course schedule
- ☐ Conversation with someone who had studied abroad
- ☐ Friend(s) who plan to study abroad with me
- ☐ Encouragement from friends
- ☐ Encouragement from family
- ☐ Encouragement from my academic adviser
- ☐ Encouragement from my academic department
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *greatest* influence on your decision to plan to study abroad. **(Factors Listed)**

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *second greatest* influence on your decision to plan to study abroad. (If applicable) **(Factors Listed)**

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *third greatest* influence on your decision to plan to study abroad. (If applicable) **(Factors Listed)**

Was your decision to attend Binghamton University influenced by its study abroad program offerings?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If student answered “No” to the question “Do you intend to study abroad?” he or she was directed to the following questions:

Which of the following factors influenced your decision not to study abroad? (Please select *all* that apply).

- ☐ Lack of interest in studying abroad
- ☐ Don’t think studying abroad will benefit me
- ☐ Financial concerns
- ☐ Safety concerns

- ☐ Fear of discrimination
- ☐ Concerned about cultural differences
- ☐ Lack of information about BU's study abroad programs
- ☐ Lack of program(s) offered by Binghamton University in location(s) of interest to me
- ☐ Lack of program(s) offered by SUNY in location(s) of interest to me
- ☐ Lack of previous travel experience
- ☐ Inability to fit study abroad into my course schedule
- ☐ Lack of foreign language skills
- ☐ Not knowing anyone who has studied abroad and/or plans to study abroad
- ☐ Don't want to be away from home and/or school for an extended period of time
- ☐ Extracurricular activities in which I'm involved
- ☐ Job responsibilities
- ☐ Family responsibilities
- ☐ Fear of discrimination
- ☐ Lack of encouragement from friends
- ☐ Lack of encouragement from family
- ☐ Lack of encouragement from my academic advisor
- ☐ Lack of encouragement from my academic department
- ☐ Other (please specify)

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *greatest* influence on your decision not to study abroad. **(Factors Listed)**

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *second greatest* influence on your decision to plan to study abroad. **(Factors Listed)**

If you selected more than one factor, please state the factor that had the *third greatest* influence on your decision to plan to study abroad. **(Factors Listed)**

Before taking this survey, were you aware that financial aid may be used for study abroad programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Before taking this survey, were you aware that study abroad programs are available at Binghamton University?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Before taking this survey, were you aware that Binghamton University students may study abroad on programs offered by other SUNY schools?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(All students were asked the following questions)

Have you ever discussed studying abroad with your family?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If student answered “Yes” to the question “Have you ever discussed studying abroad with your family?” he or she was directed to the following question:

To what extent was your family supportive of the idea of you studying abroad?

- ☐ Very supportive
- ☐ Somewhat supportive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat opposed
- ☐ Very opposed

Have you ever discussed studying abroad with your friends?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If student answered “Yes” to the question “Have you ever discussed studying abroad with your friends?” he or she was directed to the following question:

To what extent were your friends supportive of the idea of you studying abroad?

- ☐ Very supportive
- ☐ Somewhat supportive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat opposed
- ☐ Very opposed

Have you ever discussed studying abroad with your academic adviser?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If student answered “Yes” to the question “Have you ever discussed studying abroad with your academic adviser?” he or she was directed to the following question:

To what extent was your academic adviser supportive of the idea of you studying abroad?

- ☐ Very supportive
- ☐ Somewhat supportive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat opposed
- ☐ Very opposed

Has anyone in your academic department (besides your academic adviser) informed you of study abroad opportunities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ This question does not apply to me

If student answered “Yes” to the question “Has anyone in your academic department (besides your academic adviser) informed you of study abroad opportunities?” he or she was directed to the following question:

How were you informed of study abroad opportunities by your department? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ E-mail sent to students on department listserv
- ☐ In a class
- ☐ In a meeting with a faculty member (other than my adviser)
- ☐ Other _____

Questions Related to the Office of International Programs (all students were asked these questions)

Prior to taking this survey, had you heard of Binghamton University’s Office of International Programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you ever visited the website of the Office of International Programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you know where the Office of International Programs is located on campus?

- ☐ Yes

- ☐ No

Have you ever visited the Office of International Programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you ever attended a study abroad information session held by the Office of International Programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If student answered “Yes” to the question “Have you ever attended a study abroad information session held by the Office of International Programs?” he or she was directed to the following question:

Did the information session provide you with sufficient information about studying abroad?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If student answered “No” to the question “Did the information session provide you with sufficient information about studying abroad?” he or she was directed to the following question:

Please explain what information about studying abroad you would have liked to have learned about or learned more about during the information session.

Have you ever attended a study abroad fair held by the Office of International Programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you ever attended walk-in advising hours at the Office of International Programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you ever had an advising appointment with a study abroad adviser?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you ever contacted the Office of International Programs to find out about study abroad opportunities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If student answered “Yes” to the question “Have you ever contacted the Office of International Programs to find out about study abroad opportunities?” he or she was directed to the following question:

How did you contact the Office of International Programs?

- ☐ E-mail
- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Other _____

In what way(s) do you think the Office of International Programs could better inform students about study abroad opportunities?

In what way(s) do you think the Office of International Programs could better assist students who plan to study abroad? (Please only answer this question if you have studied abroad or have planned to study abroad).

General Information Questions (All students will be asked these questions)

Within which of the following categories is your major? (If you have not declared a major, please select “undeclared.” If you have more than one major, select all that apply).

- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Social & behavioral sciences
- ☐ Physical & biological sciences
- ☐ Arts

- ☐ Math, engineering, computer science, technology
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Human development
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Nursing
- ☐ Undeclared
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Within which of the following Binghamton University colleges and schools is your degree program? (If you will receive more than one degree, select all that apply).

- ☐ Harpur College of Arts and Sciences
- ☐ Thomas J. Watson School of Engineering and Applied Science
- ☐ Decker School of Nursing
- ☐ College of Community and Public Affairs
- ☐ School of Management
- ☐ School of Education
- ☐ I don't know

What is your academic level?

- ☐ Freshman
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior
- ☐ Non-matriculated
- ☐ Other _____

What is your enrollment status?

- ☐ Part-time student
- ☐ Full-time student
- ☐ Non-matriculated

What is your employment status?

- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Not employed

What is your cumulative GPA?

- ☐ 1 or below
- ☐ 1.01 – 1.5
- ☐ 1.51 – 2
- ☐ 2.01 – 2.5
- ☐ 2.51 – 3
- ☐ 3.01 – 3.5
- ☐ 3.51 – 4
- ☐ I don't know

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

What is your age?

- ☐ 17 or younger
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51-60
- ☐ 61 or older

What is your racial or ethnic background?

- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Asian or Asian-American
- ☐ Native American
- ☐ Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other (please specify)

What is the highest level of education your mother has completed?

- ☐ Did not complete high school or receive a GED
- ☐ High school graduate or recipient of a GED
- ☐ Some college, did not graduate

- Associates degree
- Bachelors degree
- Masters degree
- Doctoral or terminal degree
- I don't know

What is the highest level of education your father has completed?

- Did not complete high school or receive a GED
- High school graduate or recipient of a GED
- Some college, did not graduate
- Associates degree
- Bachelors degree
- Masters degree
- Doctoral or terminal degree
- I don't know

What is your total household income?

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,001 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$59,999
- \$60,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$79,999
- \$80,000 to \$89,999
- \$90,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- I don't know
- I prefer not to answer this question

Appendix C

Focus Group Protocol

Note: The same protocol was used during both focus groups (with minor word changes), since the students who were in the focus group who have not yet studied abroad would like to study abroad.

- 1) What led you to first become interested in studying abroad?
- 2) Were there any people in particular who influenced your decision to study abroad?
If so, who were they (without stating names)?
- 3) Was there any information in particular that influenced your decision to study abroad? If so, what was it?
- 4) What factor(s) did you consider most important while determining whether or not to study abroad?
- 5) What factor(s) did you consider most important while determining which study abroad program to choose?
- 6) How did you hear about the study abroad program that you ended up going on?
- 7) How helpful was the Office of International Programs in providing you with the information you needed to decide whether or not to study abroad?
How helpful was the Office of International Programs in providing you with the information you needed to decide which program to choose?
- 8) Is there any information that you wish you had known while making your decision about studying abroad? If so, what was it?
- 9) If you were a staff member in the Office of International Programs, how would you inform students about study abroad opportunities?

What assistance and/or information would you offer to students who have shown an interest in studying abroad but have not yet made a final decision about whether or not to study abroad?

10) What question should I have asked during this focus group discussion?

Appendix D

Tables

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of survey sample

Demographic Characteristics	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Gender (n=1,637)		
Female	961	58.7%
Male	676	41.3%
Race/Ethnicity (n=1,623)		
White	1,056	65.1%
Asian or Asian-American	316	19.5%
Hispanic or Latino	105	6.5%
Black or African American	75	4.6%
Other	71	4.4%
Academic Major (n=1,652)		
Social & Behavioral Sciences	277	16.8%
More than 1 major category selected	246	14.9%
Math, Engineering, Computer Science, Technology	242	14.6%
Humanities	237	14.3%
Physical & Biological sciences	225	13.6%
Business	213	12.9%
Undeclared	136	8.2%
Nursing	48	2.9%
Other	28	1.7%
Academic Level (n=1,648)		
Freshman	304	18.4%
Sophomore	413	25.1%
Junior	488	29.6%
Senior	443	26.9%

Note: Students only had the option of selecting one race or ethnicity category to which they identified. Respondents who selected one race or ethnicity category and also wrote another race or ethnicity category in the comment box for “Other” were coded as “Other.” In addition to the race and ethnicity categories above, the survey also had “Native American” and “Pacific Islander” categories. Because there were so few respondents who chose these categories, their responses were coded as “Other.” In addition to the categories above, the survey also had “Arts,” “Human Development,” and “Education” categories. The responses of students who selected the Arts category were combined with the responses in the Humanities category. The responses of students who selected “Human Development” were combined with the responses in the “Social

& Behavioral Sciences” category. The responses of students who selected “Education” were combined with the responses in the “Other” category. The responses of students who selected more than one major category were coded as “More than 1 major category selected.” The responses in the “Other” category were reviewed, and combined with the responses of the major category within which they fell. For example, responses of students who indicated in the comment field for the “Other” category that they were psychology majors were combined with the responses in the “Social and Behavioral Sciences” category.

Table 2

Demographic characteristics of the BU undergraduate population in Fall 2010

Demographic Characteristics	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Gender		
Male	6,299	53.4%
Female	5,488	46.6%
Race/Ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic/Latino	5,661	48.0%
Race and/or ethnicity unknown	1,771	15.0%
Asian, non-Hispanic/Latino	1,464	12.4%
Nonresident Aliens (International Students)	1,194	10.1%
Hispanic/Latino	924	7.8%
Black or African American, non-Hispanic/Latino	641	5.4%
Two or More Races, non-Hispanic/Latino	109	0.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic/Latino	20	0.2%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic/Latino	3	0.03%
Academic Major		
Science & Math Division	2,029	17.3%*
Engineering and Computer Science Majors	1,887	16.0%
Fine Arts and Humanities Division	1,677	14.3%*
Social Sciences Division	1,624	13.9%*
Nursing	387	3.3%
Management	Not reported	Not reported
Academic Level		
Freshman	2,065	17.5%
Sophomore	2,687	22.8%
Junior	3,125	26.5%
Senior	3,910	33.2%

* The percentages for these divisions were calculated based on Fall 2009 data, as opposed to Fall 2010 data. Fall 2010 data was not reported on the website of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning for these divisions. The total number of undergraduate students in Fall 2009 was 11,706, and the total number of undergraduate students in Fall 2010 was 11,787.

Table 3

Demographic characteristics of students in the focus group of students who have studied abroad

Gender	Number of Participants
Male	4
Female	3
Race/Ethnicity	
White	5
Black or African American	1
Asian or Asian-American	1
Hispanic or Latino	0
Other	0
Major Category	
More than 1 major category selected	2
Humanities	1
Social & Behavioral Sciences	1
Physical & Biological sciences	1
Math, Engineering, Computer Science, Technology	1
Business	1
Nursing	0
Undeclared	0
Other	0

N=7

Table 4

Demographic characteristics of students in the focus group of students who have not studied abroad

Gender	Number of Participants
Male	1
Female	1
Race/Ethnicity	
White	1
Black or African American	0
Asian or Asian-American	0
Hispanic or Latino	0
Other	1
Major Category	
More than 1 major category selected	2
Humanities	0
Social & Behavioral Sciences	0
Physical & Biological sciences	0
Math, Engineering, Computer Science, Technology	0
Business	0
Nursing	0
Undeclared	0
Other	0

N=2

Table 5

Responses to the question “Have you studied abroad?”

Have Studied Abroad		Have Not Studied Abroad		Total	
Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
333	19.2%	1,400	80.8%	1,733	100.0%

Table 6

Responses to the question “Do you intend to study abroad?”

Have Not Studied Abroad				Total	
Intend to Study Abroad		Do Not Intend to Study Abroad			
Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
600	43.0%	796	57.0%	1,396	100.0%

Table 7

Percentage of students who do not intend to study abroad who indicated that each factor influenced their decision not to study abroad

Factor	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Financial concerns	543	70%
Inability to fit study abroad into my course schedule	449	58%
Lack of foreign language skills	217	28%
Don't want to be away from home and/or school for an extended period of time	199	26%
Lack of encouragement from others	160	21%
Lack of information about BU's study abroad programs	148	19%
Job responsibilities	141	18%
Extracurricular activities in which I'm involved	139	18%
Lack of interest in studying abroad	131	17%
Family responsibilities	129	17%
Don't think studying abroad will benefit me	120	16%
Lack of program(s) offered in location(s) of interest to me	103	13%
Safety concerns	96	12%
Lack of previous travel experience	78	10%
Concerned about cultural differences	63	8%
Fear of discrimination	22	3%

n=775

Table 8

Responses to the question "Have you studied abroad?" by academic major

Academic Major	Have Studied Abroad (n = 298)			Have Not Studied Abroad (n = 1,354)		
	Number	% Within Academic Major	% Within Have Studied Abroad	Number	% Within Academic Major	% Within Have Not Studied Abroad
Humanities	58	24.5%	19.5%	179	75.5%	13.2%
Social and behavioral sciences	65	23.5%	21.8%	212	76.5%	15.7%
Physical and biological sciences	24	10.7%	8.1%	201	89.3%	14.8%
Math, engineering, computer science, technology	30	12.4%	10.1%	212	87.6%	15.7%
Business	54	25.4%	18.1%	159	74.6%	11.7%
Nursing	7	14.6%	2.3%	41	85.4%	3.0%
Undeclared	10	7.4%	3.4%	126	92.6%	9.3%
More than one major category selected	48	19.5%	16.1%	198	80.5%	14.6%
Other	2	7.1%	0.7%	26	92.9%	1.9%

Table 9

Responses to the question "Do you intend to study abroad?" by academic major

Academic Major	Have Not Studied Abroad					
	Intend to Study Abroad (n = 579)			Do Not Intend to Study Abroad (n = 775)		
	Number	% Within Academic Major	% Within Intend to Study Abroad	Number	% Within Academic Major	% Within Do Not Intend to Study Abroad
Humanities	87	48.6%	15.0%	92	51.4%	11.9%
Social and behavioral sciences	81	38.2%	14.0%	131	61.8%	16.9%
Physical and biological sciences	82	40.8%	14.2%	119	59.2%	15.4%
Math, engineering, computer science, technology	55	25.9%	9.5%	157	74.1%	20.3%
Business	61	38.4%	10.5%	98	61.6%	12.6%
Nursing	7	17.1%	1.2%	34	82.9%	4.4%
Undeclared	87	69.0%	15.0%	39	31.0%	5.0%
More than one major category selected	104	52.5%	18.0%	94	47.5%	12.1%
Other	15	57.7%	2.6%	11	42.3%	1.4%

Table 10

Number and percentage of students who do not intend to study abroad in each academic major who indicated that 4 different factors influenced their decision not to study abroad

Academic Major	Don't Think Studying Abroad Will Benefit Me		Lack of Interest in Studying Abroad		Lack of Foreign Language Skills		Inability to Fit Study Abroad Into Course Schedule	
	Number	% Within Academic Major	Number	% Within Academic Major	Number	% Within Academic Major	Number	% Within Academic Major
Humanities	8	9.0%	8	9.0%	22	24.7% 40		44.9%
Social & behavioral sciences	11	8.5%	14	10.9% 34	26.4% 70			54.3%
Physical & biological sciences	24	20.5%	25	21.4% 35	29.9% 87			74.4%
Math, Engineering, Computer Science, Technology	44	28.2%	45	28.8% 57	36.5% 98			62.8%
Business	11	11.3%	13	13.4% 25	25.8% 45			46.4%
Nursing	2	5.9%	2	5.9%	2	5.9%	26	76.5%
Undeclared	9	23.1%	13	33.3% 16	41.0% 16			41.0%
More than 1 major category selected	7	7.5%	8	8.6%	20	21.5% 62		66.7%
Other	2	18.2%	2	18.2% 4	36.4% 5			45.5%

n = 765

Table 11

Number and percentage of male and female respondents who do not intend to study abroad who indicated that each factor influenced their decision not to study abroad

Factors that Influenced Decision Not to Study Abroad	Male		Female		Pearson Chi Square P-Value
	Number	Percent of Males	Number	Percent of Females	
Lack of interest in studying abroad	92	24.5%	37	9.7%	0.000**
Don't think studying abroad will benefit me	81	21.5%	37	9.7%	0.000**
Financial concerns	271	72.1%	261	68.5%	0.283
Safety concerns	37	9.8%	56	14.7%	0.042*
Fear of discrimination	13	3.5%	8	2.1%	0.255
Concerned about cultural differences	35	9.3%	28	7.3%	0.329
Lack of information about BU's study abroad programs	83	22.1%	62	16.3%	0.043*
Lack of programs offered by BU and/or SUNY in location(s) of interest to me	49	13.0%	54	14.2%	0.647
Lack of previous travel experience	29	7.7%	49	12.9%	0.020*
Inability to fit study abroad into my course schedule	205	54.5%	241	63.3%	0.015*
Lack of foreign language skills	127	33.8%	86	22.6%	0.001**
Don't want to be away from home and/or school for an extended period of time	81	21.5%	112	29.4%	0.013*
Extracurricular activities in which I'm involved	66	17.6%	70	18.4%	0.769
Job responsibilities	63	16.8%	74	19.4%	0.341
Family responsibilities	51	13.6%	76	19.9%	0.019*
Lack of encouragement from others (friends, family, academic adviser, academic department, and/or people who've studied abroad)	74	19.7%	82	21.5%	0.531

** Significant at the 0.01 level, which means that there is a less than 1% chance that the deviation in observed results from expected results is due to chance alone.

* Significant at the 0.05 level, which means that there is a less than 5% chance that the deviation in observed results from expected results is due to chance alone.

n= 757

Table 12

Percentage of males and females who do not intend to study abroad who selected 8 factors that influenced the decisions of students of different genders significantly differently

	Percentage of Males	Percentage of Females	Pearson Chi Square P-Value
Factors Selected Significantly More By Males			
Lack of foreign language skills	33.8%	22.6%	0.001**
Lack of interest in studying abroad	24.5%	9.7%	0.000**
Don't think studying abroad will benefit me	21.5%	9.7%	0.000**
Lack of information about BU's study abroad programs	22.1%	16.3%	0.043*
Factors Selected Significantly More By Females			
Inability to fit study abroad into my course schedule	54.5%	63.3%	0.015*
Don't want to be away from home and/or school for an extended period of time	21.5%	29.4%	0.013*
Family responsibilities	13.6%	19.9%	0.019*
Safety concerns	9.8%	14.7%	0.042*

** Significant at the 0.01 level, which means that there is a less than 1% chance that the deviation in observed results from expected results is due to chance alone.

* Significant at the 0.05 level, which means that there is a less than 5% chance that the deviation in observed results from expected results is due to chance alone.

n = 757

Table 13

Responses to the question “Have you studied abroad?” by race/ethnicity

	Have Studied Abroad n = 296			Have Not Studied Abroad n = 1,327		
			% Within Have Studied Abroad			% Within Have Not Studied Abroad
Race/Ethnicity	Number	% Within Race/Ethnicity		Number	% Within Race/Ethnicity	
Black or African-American	10	13.3%	3.4%	65	86.7%	4.9%
Hispanic or Latino	16	15.2%	5.4%	89	84.8%	6.7%
Asian or Asian-American	71	22.5%	24.0%	245	77.5%	18.5%
White	175	16.6%	59.1%	881	83.4%	66.4%
Other	24	33.8%	8.1%	47	66.2%	3.5%

Table 14

Responses to the question “Do you intend to study abroad?” by race/ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Have Not Studied Abroad					
	Intend to Study Abroad n = 564			Do Not Intend to Study Abroad n = 763		
	Number	% Within Race/Ethnicity	% Within Intend to Study Abroad	Number	% Within Race/Ethnicity	% Within Do Not Intend to Study Abroad
Black or African-American	39	60.0%	6.9%	26	40.0%	3.4%
Hispanic or Latino	49	55.1%	8.7%	40	44.9%	5.2%
Asian or Asian-American	117	47.8%	20.7%	128	52.2%	16.8%
White	339	38.5%	60.1%	542	61.5%	71.0%
Other	20	42.6%	3.5%	27	57.4%	3.5%

Table 15

Responses to the survey question: "In what way(s) do you think the OIP better inform students about study abroad opportunities?"

	Number of Responses
Already Doing Good Job	88
I don't know	23
Not Applicable	13
Students Will Search Out Info if Interested	13
Students the OIP Should Target	
New or Incoming Students (either freshmen or transfer students)	36
Information the OIP Should Provide More Of	
Major-specific information about study abroad programs	40
Information about funding options (financial aid, scholarships)	32
Existence of OIP	23
Location of OIP	18
Existence of information sessions	17
Study Abroad Process (how to apply, how credits transfer, etc.)	12
Ways the OIP Should Convey Information to Students	
E-mail	226
More/better advertising	134
Flyers/posters	102
Information sessions/More Information sessions	69
Speak about studying abroad in classes	58
B-Line Announcements	44
Students who've studied abroad	32
Reach out more/go to students/increase visibility	27
Academic departments	25
Events	22
Professors speaking about studying abroad	20
Social Networking Site (Facebook)	19
More Fairs	19
Through orientation (either freshmen or transfer orientation)	16
Tabling (general)	15
More info on OIP website	13
Academic advisers	12
Info sessions various times and days	12
Info sessions in residence halls	11
Table in the Union, specifically	11

Note: Number of total responses = 1,067. Only responses with a frequency of 11 or more were added to this table.

Table 16

Responses to the survey question: "In what way(s) do you think the Office of International Programs could better assist students who plan to study abroad?"

	Number of Responses
Already Doing Good Job	26
Not Applicable	39
Don't Know	10
Assistance that the OIP Should Provide More Of	
Connect students who intend to study abroad with those who have studied abroad	41
Information about funding options (i.e. financial aid, scholarships)	37
Increase the amount of financial support that students can receive (i.e. more financial aid and scholarships)	14
Explain and/or guide students through the study abroad process (application process, credit transfer process, etc.)	35
Clearly outline costs of study abroad programs	13
Make information about programs from other SUNY schools more accessible	13
Offer more programs for engineering majors	7
Assign each student a study abroad adviser	8
Increase accessibility of study abroad advisers	9
Send information via e-mail	9
Hold more information sessions	6
Provide more information about the culture in specific countries	6

Note: Number of total responses = 535. Only responses with a frequency of 6 or more were added to this table. Only students who have studied abroad or have planned to study abroad were supposed to answer this question; however, access to this question was not limited.

Appendix E

Quotes of Focus Group Participants Related to Each Theme

Theme 1: Students think the OIP can better inform students about study abroad programs that are suitable for specific majors

Quote from the focus group with students who have studied abroad:

“I got one [an e-mail] through my major listserv, but I never got one through the pre-health – like I don’t think they ever think pre-health students are ever [going to] study abroad, just because of their majors or whatever, but I think if they put like programs like the one you did, about more science programs that you could take...so I think that’s probably another thing – tailoring it more to specific majors or groups of majors.”

Quotes from the focus group with students who have not studied abroad:

Quote 1: “I don’t think there’s very much information about School of Management students. It seemed to be mostly liberal arts courses. So if they had more information for students who can’t necessarily just...take liberal arts courses...abroad, that would have been more helpful.”

Quote 2: “I would want to know what courses they offer [abroad], because they don’t really put that in there.”

Quote 3: “Maybe on each school’s website, like on Harpur’s website, have...specific schools [abroad] that would be, you know, more appropriate for specific majors,...maybe they have more courses in that major.”

Theme 2: Students think the OIP can better inform/assist students by providing them with more information/assistance related to funding options for studying abroad

Quotes from the focus group with students who have studied abroad:

Quote 1: “I think put more information about like loans – I know they have like scholarships that they do – but for the winter intersession, there was nothing. And then, I like by chance went to Financial Services and then I had to have a meeting with this woman, and then there are all these like student loans you can get – like smaller ones. So if they had more information down there just about loans and ways to finance it, I think it would be really helpful.”

Quote 2: “I also think it would be good if they let us know that your financial aid will transfer over to whatever university you go to as long as it’s within the SUNY system, at least. And I feel like a lot of students don’t think about studying abroad because they feel like it’ll be much more expensive, but if everybody knows that your financial aid will transfer, then you’ll probably attract more students.”

Quotes from the focus group with students who have not studied abroad:

“Yeah, I think that’s the biggest factor in - in most students’ choice of where they’re going to study. Even when they apply for colleges the first time...they definitely look at cost, so, maybe having some sort of calculator, which you can input the cost of the school, and...it can show you how much it will cost for you to go there...using different financial aid and stuff and scholarships. And...definitely having like...a database of scholarships for,...maybe even for each school that’s in another country. So if you’re applying to a school, you can look at specific scholarships for that – that would apply to that school.”

Theme 3: Students think the OIP can improve and/or increase its advertising efforts

Quotes from the focus group with students who have studied abroad:

“Just different things for different students, because for me, if you sold me on one specific trip, like I wasn’t really – didn’t have my heart set on any specific country or anywhere – for me, if I would have just seen a flyer with like 97 font that said SUNYSystemAbroad.com, when I was a

sophomore, that would have been way more helpful than like ‘You should come to Japan because this, this, and this will happen. And it’s offered.’ Okay, but um tell me how to look at other stuff, too.”

Theme 4: Students think the OIP should provide more opportunities for students to hear about other students’ past study abroad experiences

Quotes from the focus group with students who have studied abroad:

Quote 1: “Also, just since you meet with only a study abroad adviser, [unable to hear phrase] a general knowledge of the programs that are abroad, but he doesn’t or he or she does not have a specific knowledge, so maybe if you – if somebody wants to go to China – for example, have a student come in who’s been to China before, and then talk about the costs and everything that you could do. That would be good. Because I didn’t know where to live, I didn’t know what to do, where to be at all – no clue what was going on.”

Quote 2 (another students’ response to Quote 1): “Yeah, I think networking with somebody who had done the program before...that would have been like the best – the best intro into the program.”

Quotes from the focus group with students who have not studied abroad:

“I also think like having mini information sessions for students who studied abroad let’s say – I’m just going to say Oxford – let’s say have an information session for students who are interested in studying in England. So you could have a mini information session with a student who already studied abroad, and have them speak about their experiences, and it doesn’t matter how small it is, because it’s more effective if it’s a smaller information session, anyway.”